

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DENVER – April 10, 2014 – The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing announced today it has enrolled more than 22,700 children since October 1, 2013 who were previously eligible for Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+), but had not yet enrolled in coverage. Medicaid and CHP+ are free or low cost public health insurance programs for Coloradans who qualify.

"The Department, along with our county, community partners and children's advocacy groups, including All Kids Covered, continue to work towards covering more children in Colorado," says Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN, executive director. "Enrolling these additional children was a result of new application enhancements and outreach strategies. Now, more children in Colorado are getting the coverage and access to consistent care they need, which will help lead to a healthier Colorado."

Since October 1, 2013, more than 14,450 new children have enrolled in Medicaid. Additionally, more than 8,250 new children are now receiving coverage through CHP+. This increase in enrollment is a result of multiple outreach and awareness efforts at the state and local level, including improvements to the online application process for Medicaid and CHP+. All children enrolled in Medicaid and CHP+, including these previously eligible children, will receive 12 months of continuous eligibility coverage even if their family's income or household size changes.

"As a part of Colorado's implementation of health care reform, we have worked to improve our online application for Medicaid and CHP+, Colorado.gov/PEAK. These application enhancements have led to more children benefiting from coverage," says Antoinette Taranto, Acting Director, Office of Client Services, Eligibility and Enrollment. "The Department has drastically reduced the time it takes to process applications for Medicaid and CHP+, with most applicants who complete their application completely and accurately finding out immediately if they qualify."

The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing has partnered with the Department of Human Services to send letters to Coloradans who receive food assistance and let them know they may also be eligible for Medicaid coverage. Now more than 4,600 children and 12,000 adults currently receiving food assistance are receiving health care coverage through Medicaid or CHP+.

Colorado's efforts to enroll children in Medicaid and CHP+ coverage has been recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for four consecutive years. In late 2013, the Department was awarded \$58.5 million as a part of the Children's Health Insurance

Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) Performance Bonus. This was the second consecutive year that Colorado's award has been the highest in the nation.

Unlike private health insurance, Medicaid and CHP+ do not have an open enrollment period; Coloradans can apply at any time to find out if they qualify. Applications can be completed online at <u>Colorado.gov/PEAK</u>, over the phone, <u>in-person at your county office</u> or by mail.

For more information about Medicaid and CHP+ visit <u>Colorado.gov/HCPF</u> and to find out more about health care coverage options visit <u>Colorado.gov/Health</u>.

About the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing: The department administers the Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* programs as well as a variety of other programs for low-income Coloradans who qualify. The mission of the department is to improve health care access and outcomes for the people we serve while demonstrating sound stewardship of financial resources. For more information about the department, please visit Colorado.gov/hcpf.

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